Remarks by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton at the end of her visit to Lebanon

Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, made today the following remarks:

"I am delighted to be back in Beirut at this crucial moment in Lebanon’s political life.

This morning I have had the honour to meet with Prime Minister Designate Mikati, Speaker of the Parliament, Berri and President Sleiman, who all have vital roles in the formation of the future government for Lebanon.

The meetings took place in a very constructive atmosphere and with full respect of the positions of all parties.

I came to Lebanon at this critical moment to discuss issues of common interest and listen personally to my interlocutors’ assessment on the current situation in Lebanon and the wider region.

I encouraged all political leaders to facilitate the formation of a representative government in a spirit of consensus – built on justice, stability and deep democracy which must be reinforced in the interests of the Lebanese people.

In addition, I encouraged them to guarantee Lebanon’s commitment to abide with its constitution and with its international obligations. All UN Security Council Resolutions count and need to be abided by, including those related to the Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

I made the point that the EU is looking forward to a government programme which will take on board these elements and advance Lebanon’s reform agenda.

I assured that the EU stands ready to assist Lebanon on this path and reiterated the EU’s full support to a sovereign, independent, democratic, peaceful and stable Lebanon".

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